

THE SHOOTERS ALLIANCE FOR FIREARMS RIGHTS
MICHIGAN GUN OWNERS

STATEMENT OF POSITION REGARDING

HOUSE BILL 5303

The Shooters Alliance for Firearm Rights and Michigan Gun Owners, representing a combined membership of over one thousand hunters, sport shooters, gun collectors, firearms dealers, and otherwise law-abiding firearms owners throughout the state of Michigan, actively support House Bill 5303 and encourage the Legislature to pass it as is, and forward it to the Governor for her signature.

Michigan law regulates the manner and purposes for which law-abiding firearms owners may transport handguns in their motor vehicles. The statute that is the subject of HB 5303, MCL 750.231a, states that a Michigan resident may lawfully transport a pistol in a closed case, in the trunk or cargo compartment of that motor vehicle, for any lawful purpose. "Lawful purpose" is defined as transporting the pistol to or from the owner's home, place of business, hunting or target shooting area, place where the gun is to be bought or sold or repaired, or other place where the pistol may be lawful possessed or used.

The problem that HB 5303 seeks to address is that all too many lawful firearms owners have been harrassed, ticketed, or arrested by law enforcement officers who interpret the statute to mean that the only transportation allowed is a direct, shortest-route, "point A to point B" journey from one place to another. Members of SAFR and MGO have reported being harrassed, ticketed, or arrested while lawfully transporting pistols, merely because they stopped at a restaurant for a meal, stopped to address other personal business, shopped at a store to purchase groceries, or even because they have stopped at a gas station to fill their cars with gasoline.

HB 5303 seeks clarify that a lawful pistol owner may choose his or her own route to or from the permissible places, to take reasonable side trips to conduct other lawful business, to stop at a restaurant for a meal, or to stop at a gas station to fill up, without risk of arrest. HB 5303 does not expand the scope of activities in which a pistol owner may engage while having the pistol in his or her car, nor does it expand the definition of "lawful purpose" for which a pistol may be transported in a motor vehicle.

SAFR and MGO request that this Committee vote to approve HB 5303, and forward it to the House for consideration and approval.